

Abstract: The university, as an institution and as a space, is complex. A middle scale outside the comfort zone of architects, the campus bridges between the architectural and the urban. In response to professional pressures on architects, the study of campus planning emerged in the mid-twentieth century as a technocratic concern. The campus became a spatial type worthy of analytical attention and epistemic production. The functionalist approach to campus studies eventually gave way to more academic and less instrumental interests in the subject. To take stock of the development of the conceptualization of the campus as an object of analysis, I utilize the biographical method as a lens through which to read the differentiation within the field. This essay vicariously traces the contours of the campus' discursive landscape by focusing on the oeuvre of the discourse's prime inciter to discourse, Richard Dober. Through a close reading of his monographs, a textured picture of campus studies emerges; the discourse first coalesces around modernist, functionalist, and subsequently international concerns about the efficacy and adequacy of the spatial provisions accorded to rapidly expanding higher education. This is followed by a discursive turn towards more humanistic concerns like history and art, ushered by the publication of Paul Turner's seminal history of the campus in the United States. Dober was not immune to this discursive shift, but took it in stride, producing many books attempting to reconcile his rationalist, modernist predilections with the ascendance of lyricism and beauty as core analytical concerns. His oeuvre developed and expanded, incorporating campus history and aesthetics as primary interpretive threads. The ardent functionalist of yesteryear had to adapt and assume a humanistic outlook in his later years. In sum, campus discourse's story is a bipolar one, jumpstarted by modernist concerns spearheaded by Dober only to later be inflected by the Turner plot point towards scholarship in the vein of that produced by historian-aesthetes. Because Dober lived, worked, and wrote prolifically through all this, his collective works serve as an index of the evolution and differentiation of the campus discourse, and his books as lampposts along the shifting discursive landscape of campus planning and design. This deep dive into Dober's oeuvre and its interfaces with discursive developments illuminates how his oeuvre is *reflected in* and *inflected by* the evolution of the campus discourse. Uniquely intertwined with the discourse, Dober's biography is an opportune proxy through which to sketch a biography of the discursive campus.

Keywords: Campus planning and design, higher education, Richard Dober, intellectual biography, discursive paradigm shift

INTRODUCTION

In 1960, *Architectural Record* published "Campus Planning: The Unique World of the University," an article authored by Eero Saarinen tackling the distinctive difficulties and opportunities of campus planning. Having spent the larger part of the previous decade unsuccessfully trying to turn his masterplan of the University of Michigan's new North Campus into reality, Saarinen's article was an attempt to salvage value from the experience by formulating campus planning guidance. The silver lining of his tribulations at Michigan was that he could pontificate on campus planning not simply as a field of possibility for architects but as a formidable challenge. Beyond procedural advice like recommending that universities retain their campus masterplanners for architectural design services, Saarinen enjoined campus designs that reconciled design ambition with design context. The essay was an inchoate attempt by one of the midcentury's most prominent architectural figures to consciously and

methodically approach the specific question of campus design. His contention was that the university campus is a unique architectural problem, warranting special attention and, by extension, the cultivation of specialized expertise. Saarinen would have been happy to see that no more than three years later a monograph on this topic had been published—Richard Dober's *Campus Planning*—but he did not live to see it.

Dober's book, the first comprehensive guide for campus planning, was the genesis of the specialized discourse prefigured by Saarinen's article. Described as a "landmark book" in the historical trajectory of campus planning (Crawford 2014, 26), this was the first of many books which the campus planner authored. By far the most prolific writer on the subject, he continued to write until his death in 2014. He was campus discourse's prime inciter to discourse. Dober's collective works thus serve as an index of the evolution and differentiation of the campus discourse. This essay surveys his

monography, perusing his books in order to situate them as lampposts along the shifting discursive landscape of campus planning and design. This deep dive into Dober's oeuvre and its interfaces with discursive developments seeks to illuminate how his oeuvre is *reflected in* and *inflected by* the evolution of the campus discourse. Intellectual biography here serves as a heuristic, not to produce a hagiography of an author, but a genealogy of a discourse.

1. A (SUB)DISCIPLINE FORGED IN THE FIRES OF MODERNISM

1.1. GENESIS OF THE CAMPUS DISCOURSE

Campus Planning was first published in 1963, at the height of what Clark Kerr has described as the golden age of American higher education (Kerr 2001). Dober's acute awareness of this state of affairs, and his concerns about keeping up with higher education's expansion is evident in the book. He may have led with the assertion that "the physical forms which house (and will house) the process of education are self-evidently important," but it is clear that the general import of higher education need not have been belabored (Dober 1963, i). Rather, the book was written as a preemptive response to an anticipated crisis; Dober forecast a doubling in the demand for higher education and hence campuses. He wrote as "a general practitioner of the art of planning" in order to "suggest ways and means by which the development of campuses can be controlled, so that functional goals can be aesthetically expressed with least compromise to the past, the present and the future" (i).

At its core, Dober's book is a pragmatic guide for campus planning that does not neglect aesthetics. It was conceived as a foundation which university planners and designers could build on and adapt to their particular needs and challenges. The first two words in the body of the book—"Desperate and unprecedented" [original emphasis] (3)—underscored at the outset that campus planning is no luxury, that impending was an immense challenge demanding action. At the time, American higher education was increasingly taking on more students and had pivoted its attention to science and technology, an academic territory then largely uncharted. These developments were not unique to the United States, as many other nations were undergoing their own higher educational transformations. Dober was disconcerted that many institutions gave no long-term consideration to their physical environments. His book is a university planner's guide for the perplexed, an application of systematic reason to a hitherto undefined set of institutional activities. It was the first clear mark of the professionalization of campus planning.

Dober was a modernist whose book was underpinned by rational functionalism. Divided into three sections, the book first defines campus planning and traces its history, then analyzes the campus into its programmatic components, and provides guidelines for planning the expansion of extant campuses and developing new ones. Dober conceived of the professional practice of campus planning to be a departure from a predominantly romanticist past. Tracing the development of campuses in the US from the colonial period to his present, he highlighted the University of Virginia as a foundational moment, a juncture at which campus planning became a purposive endeavor, a calling. It was not this exemplar's aesthetic character per se that was critical, but its production as a comprehensive, rational, planned project. For Dober, the problem facing campus planning was "the dominance of style over plan;" style embodied the past, while plan gestured towards the future: "Plan here does not mean the physical continuity in contiguous structures . . . it is rather the dominance of site and program over facade" (Dober 1963, 34-40). Differentiating between types of plans with regards to programmatic and spatial specificity, temporal spans, and scale, he situated planning at the interface between program and design. He admitted that his guidelines were necessarily subject to adaptations demanded by every university's particular circumstances:

This book is a synthesis of current events which I have selected to weave together as a graphic outline of a flexible approach to campus planning. The synthesis is neither gospel nor cookbook. The techniques described should be selectively applied and adjusted to the changing situations which are unique to the individual institutions. The results that can be expected from the design of structure (planning) are different from those that can be expected from the design of content (architecture). Ideally, of course, one act activity melds into the other. (Dober 1963, 308)

Dober's book constituted a detailed and thorough handbook for practitioners, peppered with American examples from across various periods and geographies. It was rich with images that illustrated his various points. Acknowledging the absence of a theory of campus planning, but settling not for an ad hoc pragmatism, his book struck a middle ground, serving as a reference which was both methodical and flexible.

1.2. GOING PUBLIC, GOING GLOBAL

Dober did not simply write *the* book on the practice of campus planning but was also engaged in service of the international sort. Keen to learn from the postwar expansion of higher education in the United Kingdom, Educational Facilities Laboratories commissioned Dober to undertake a study of British campus planning

in "anticipation that this ferment might yield ideas pertinent to the American scene" (Dober 1965, 5). The study was published in 1965 as a short, illustrated book titled *The New Campus in Britain: Ideas of Consequence for the United States*. Dober analyzed the campuses of six new postwar universities, as well as two expanding long-established universities, in hopes of applying in the US what was learnt from campus building experiences in Britain. The lessons observed in this "design laboratory" include the flexible adaptation of American and European design trends, programmatic cross-fertilization producing "continuous teaching environment[s]," and the reduction of anonymity in large institutions (7-9). The kingdom's young modernist academic spaces and (mega)structures were celebrated for their internationalism, functionalism, flexibility, and novelty.

Dober was not the only author at the time to celebrate practice. Campus planning and design was a subject of common, if niche, interest in architecture circles. In 1972, Mildred Schmertz published a compendium of campus building studies originally published between 1966 and 1970 in *Architectural Record*, where she was an editor. She prefaced the book with the notion that universities' newfound but established awareness of the importance of campus planning has created an attractive market for architects and planners, going so far as to effusively claim that campus work "comprises some of the[ir] best work" (Schmertz 1972, vii). Schmertz also acknowledged a change in campus project scale and time span from piecemeal accretion over time to rapidly constructed megaprojects. Yet, her book addressed mostly new, single buildings added to extant campuses. It focused more on additions to campuses, rather than addressing campuses as new or extant wholes. The book surveyed various campus building types, providing specific information about specific buildings, including plans, sections, details, and sometimes even execution sequences. Schmertz's book was a vehicle for built case studies, a typology of campus architecture. It was not a campus typology, though. Only two chapters addressed the scale of the campus: "The single building or building complex designed as part of the campus master plan" and "Architecture which gives a campus the unity of a single building." As is evident from these section titles, the campus as conceived by Schmertz cannot be disentangled from architecture. In this conception, the campus emerges as an epiphenomenon of architecture: "A building, essentially a group of interrelated solids, will be considered by its architects as a group of interrelated voids as well, because in the hands of a skilled designer these voids become well-scaled open spaces—courts, malls, places, and gardens—adding greatly to the campus environment" (85). Campuses

are but "large architectural compositions" (165). Despite touching upon the overall order of some campuses, the book's focus is essentially atomistic, profiling ostensibly well-designed academic buildings, in contrast to Dober's comprehensive and methodical analysis of the campus type. Emerging out of *Architectural Record's* journalism, Schmertz's book is geared towards professional consumption, constituting what Dober had elsewhere described as "a collection of good photographs of good architecture" that would find a happy home on an architect's coffee table (Dober 1963, i).

The journalistic interest though no doubt a boon to the nascent campus planning discourse, Dober was more invested in producing rigorous, data-driven knowledge. He edited the Community Development book series, a collection "of over 40 titles including technical and reference books for the planning and design professions," published by the now defunct academic press Dowden, Hutchinson & Ross (Dober n.d.). The series included the volume "Planning Buildings and Facilities for Higher Education" which was attributed to the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) but, for the most part, written by the Architects Co-Partnership of Potter's Bar, UK. This 1975 book was based on the same premise as Dober's, but now globalized: expansion in the provision of higher education across the world requires the physical expansion of its spaces. However, this expectation butts against the "new realism" of higher educational planning in the developing world: higher education is much too costly to be a priority in strained economies, and when it is a priority, the vocational is sought over the academic (UNESCO 1975, 1). The book therefore took the position that campus planning cannot be cleft from either educational or economic policy, that it is an intermediary between state policy and building construction. The book's purpose was to collect and synthesize the wisdom culled from existing literature and from the experiences of a few states and make it available to all states, especially developing countries, as well as institutions around the world.

Campus planning was here understood as a project management challenge of which time and cost effectiveness are the critical factors. To help states and institutions overcome this challenge, the book sought to be a comprehensive guide to the practice of higher educational planning from the macro scale to the micro. It triangulated between three actors—the client (colleges or universities), the design consultant (architects and planners), and the coordinating authority (regulatory and funding bodies) (figure 1)—and advocated network planning because it comprehensively takes into account any project's multiple parallel and intersecting strands. Though it professed that university planning "is not

something which can be definitively summarized in the way that a manual gives the procedures for flying a jet aircraft" (7), the book attempted to provide a methodical set of instructions for the practice of planning, which it divided into six stages:

1. Policy, which encompasses socioeconomic strategy at the national and regional levels
2. Planning, which encompasses masterplanning at the institutional level
3. Primary brief, which encompasses delineating preliminary programs, floor areas, and building masses
4. Secondary brief, which encompasses incorporating specific user requirements
5. Primary implementation, which encompasses design development based on the primary brief
6. Secondary implementation, which encompasses full construction drawing sets and construction administration

Sequentially working through the whole process, the authors dedicated a chapter to each procedure which was further broken down into smaller steps. The book also provided a series of ready-to-use flow charts, templates, checklists, and forms. Key amongst these were the "area analysis data sheets" which, if well utilized, should have ensured that project costs were controlled and kept to a minimum (16).

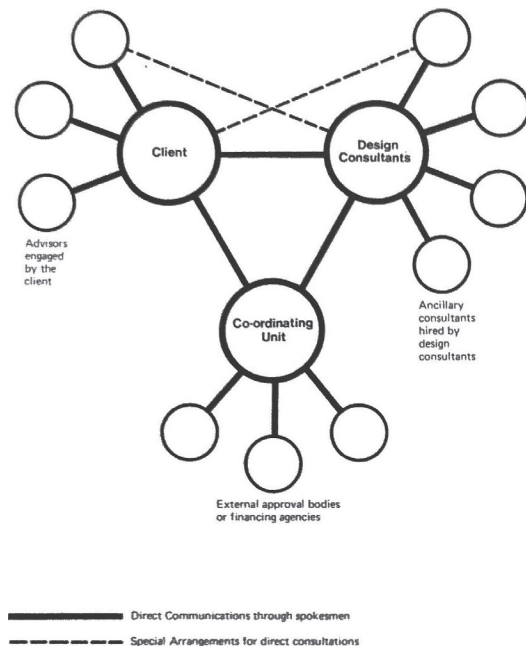


Figure 1: UNESCO's diagram of the relationship between various campus planning actors and stakeholders. (UNESCO 1975, 4)

Despite its emphasis on numerical data and calculability, the book did not claim to set international standards since that would have been futile in the face of sweeping institutional and cultural variability internationally. Rather, it sought "to provide Unesco Member States with a working tool that enables them to develop their own 'norms' and practices in response to their own needs and within the range of resources available to them" (22). Understanding higher education to be a dynamic enterprise, it eschewed determinism of both the instrumental and aesthetic sorts, eliding the binary of the functional versus the beautiful for the flexible. Building flexibility into the design is especially important during the primary brief phase, the work of which is to be limited to design technocrats who are thought to be better at balancing everyone's needs than academics, no matter how vocal. In contrast to the latter's perceived myopia of vested interests, the former are professionals who are likely to think of a building's long life beyond a single set of users. Only later, during the secondary brief stage, should users be brought into the planning and design process, a position the book admitted was controversial (73).

The book was polyvalent, at once a textbook, a handbook, and a resource book to be copied, printed, and marked up. And because it did not seek to be a unitary source of information, it was accompanied by a supplementary volume which offered planners data from around the world with which they could compare their own projects. Titled *Planning Standards for Higher Education Facilities*, the supplement was published four years after the guide. While the earlier book was about "planning procedures and the effective interaction of architects, administrators, academic personnel and others," the supplemental book focused on data dissemination by "reproducing a considerable quantity of technical information" from a handful of member states (UNESCO 1979, 5). Notwithstanding its title, the volume's purpose was to provide planners with "yardsticks," not standards. It was not a precis of UNESCO's views on the subject, but a standardized compendium of various national practices; the data was culled from 12 countries across six continents. The global scope of the volume was a reflection of the international composition of its team of authors, who hailed from Iran, Peru, and the Netherlands.

One major challenge the book tackled was the experience of higher educational planning as a "lonesome adventure," particularly in developing countries establishing their first universities (9). Though the book presented technical information from various countries in standardized, comparable, machine-readable "data sheets" (figure 2)—albeit difficult for humans to readily read—the authors accepted that

differences in planning practice abounded within and between countries and sought to document that diversity in the form of rote, descriptive rather than prescriptive specifications. Dober's illustrated exegesis of functional spatial composition reads as lyrical prose in juxtaposition to this supplement's singular accounting of spatial metrics. There was but a single drawing in the whole publication (185). It was a book composed exclusively of charts, tables, graphs, and numbers collected using standard templates—functionalism on steroids. The supplementary volume was envisioned as an intermediary between abstract, high-level guidance and developments on the ground around the world. This higher educational planning almanac was to serve as a distilled, international technical library which closed the feedback loop between UNESCO's guide and local practices; as countries built more campuses and accrued more campus building experience, new data was to be added to the compendium which was to feed into the formulation of more precise and effective generalizations about planning best practices to be published in future UNESCO guides (UNESCO 1975, 23). This was an ambitious scheme. Suffice it to say, no further guides were produced.

One study from which UNESCO's guide may have culled is *Campus Design in India*. Published in 1969 and sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development, the book sought to generalize from the "experience of a developing nation." Its authors, Achyut Kanvinde of India and H. James Miller of the American Midwest, were international collaborators who had studied at different universities in the US and crossed paths while practicing campus planning in India. The volume, well-illustrated with monochrome photographs and diagrams, is a distillation of the lessons they learnt while working on campus projects there. Though their premise in writing this book was identical to the one that motivated both Dober's earlier book and UNESCO's later guide—"keenly aware of the urgency of the hour and fully comprehend[ing] the manifold problems of the nation of India in trying to wisely utilize scarce resources in university campus development"—they set out not to simply survey the state of campus planning in the subcontinent, but to write "an authoritative guide for administrators and professionals who are charged with the responsibility of campus design in India" (Kanvinde and Miller 1969, 161). The authors did not present this focus on higher education simply as a modern fixation, but tied it to Indian history and culture, often citing Vedic traditions. The assertion of cultural continuity, however, did not negate that India's postcolonial moment was pregnant with revolutionary potential. National independence brought about the nation's self-responsibility for rapid socioeconomic

development, including developing and expanding higher education across the country. Economic pressures notwithstanding, the understanding was that new universities would inevitably be built, and existing ones expanded, so the resources of developing countries would be better put to inspiring use than to depressing use. The authors' intent was to spell out a planning and design process that results in spaces of higher education that live up to national aspirations, especially because the construction of new campuses could become "a disastrous waste of resources, unless properly directed, due to the costly specialized and permanent nature of a college or university campus" (14).

Environmental determinism was the basis of Kanvinde and Miller's enjoinders. Higher education's physical environment is critical because it is the foundation of a series of links to progress at the macro scale: India needed a socioeconomic revolution; mass higher education was the means to that revolution; campuses are where the process of higher education takes place. The authors asserted the interdependence of the quality of the campus environment, the educational experience, and the graduate: "quality of academic content is most important, but it depends on the quality of the social-living-work-study environment of a college or university campus" (15). Yet despite their importance for citizen development, such spaces were not readily available. There was a huge gap between the number of university seats in the country and its college-age population; while that ratio in the US was 40% in 1965 and projected to be 18% in the UK by 1980, India was at a meager 2% (18). The many spaces built to address this gap must be well-designed because "*intensive mass education requires good architecture to provide an environment that will enhance the efficiency and well-being of those involved*" [original emphasis] (20). The fact that rapid massification of higher education was needed in one of the world's most populous countries superscaled the urgency of the spatial emergency.

The paucity of space was compounded by wanting expertise. Kanvinde and Miller were critical of the campus planning and design status quo in India, particularly the fact that this process was generally undertaken by university engineers and governmental public works departments, parties they deemed inadequate to the grand task at hand. These actors tended not to take seriously architectural qualities and environmental comfort, heedless to the supposition that the "campus environment can spell the difference between a fine university and a mediocre one" (20). They would also eschew precision and preemptively exaggerate their space requests in case reductions became necessary later in the process, an imprudent

24

practice given the reality that a "nation with scarce resources cannot afford such wastefulness" (20). Here, environmental determinism was coupled with economic exigency. Poor architecture, especially at the scale of a campus, is an economic drain in the long run. Professional campus planning and architectural design undertaken by specialized experts was the authors' remedy. The book thus triangulates between professionals (architects and planners) and two classes of decision makers, government officials and institutional administrators. To emphasize the dependence of spatial outcomes on enlightened institutional leadership, campus design was defined as being "dependent upon a correct *process* for a successful *product*" [original emphasis] (6).

The successful product here sought was an "island of excellence" that maintains "an ambivalent position, balancing itself carefully between commitment and detachment," between being a "regional service station" and an ivory tower (24). The authors compared the campus to a miniature city, seeing similarity in both models' provision of comprehensive services to their inhabitants, but seeing divergence in the former's eschewal of the commerce motive that undergirds life in the latter. The single-minded pursuit of learning critically differentiates campus living from the cacophony of city life. They even went so far as to assert that the campus "should ideally be a quiet, comfortable oasis apart from the normally busy, noisy, congested world. In this sense a campus should be more like a residential suburb or park than a city" (25). Here, the authors valorized a pastoral model reminiscent of the Jeffersonian ideal. However, they qualified this with the assertion that a campus must not be disconnected from its context, but actively engaged in solving its community's problems. To reiterate the sociality of this spatial actor, the authors referred to the "*campus university*" as a distinct, ideal type of institution, one with a space of its own wherein students encounter real life by learning to live alongside countless others (25). To ensure that the campus supports such social interaction and avoids mediocrity, Kanvinde and Miller explained that its design must account for the prospects of growth and change over time, avoid being too big so as not to be walkable, and be sensitive to human comfort and environmental psychology. By designing the campus holistically and integrating both its natural setting and landscaped elements, elusive beauty may be attained.

In order to be able to achieve this ideal, the planning and design process must engage and attain the support of stakeholders at multiple organizational levels. The authors devoted a considerable amount of the book to walking through this process and its organizational interfaces, starting with institutional

structures, through site planning and building design, to construction administration, all with a specific focus on the Indian context and the actors, regulators, and agencies one would encounter there. Dober's two aforementioned books are cited frequently here. Working off his insights, Kanvinde and Miller emphasized that campus design is a process that requires diligent institutional effort as well as trust in expertise; administrators must choose a competent and conscientious architect who they must empower to shepherd the process towards a "creative synthesis" (60). To substantiate that attaining a fine campus is feasible, the book ends with a series of brief case studies, first of Indian campuses, then international ones. The series starts off with four cases from ancient Indian history, through one case from the Delhi Sultanate, to fourteen Indian campuses established during the 20th century. All international examples are of campuses in the UK and North America, except for Walter Gropius' design for the University of Baghdad. The common thread across almost all these highlighted cases is that they were products of collective efforts to enact living-learning environments envisioned as unified wholes. As successful products of campus design processes, they each embody quality and contextuality. On the application of these lessons to the national juncture during which they were writing, Kanvinde and Miller averred that the successful Indian campus is one that is grounded in its history but attuned to the moment, reconciling Vedic personal discipleship with modern mass education (158).

2. DOBER AND THE HUMANISTIC TURN(ER)

2.1. A NEW MAGISTERIUM

The attunement to history in the study of the campus type marks a turning point in the burgeoning discourse. Richard Turner's 1984 book, *Campus: An American Planning American Tradition*, is the most cited book on the subject. Just about every author who has since written about campuses in the United States has referenced his canonical tome. Until the publication of Turner's volume, no book covering the subject of campuses was more comprehensive than Dober's debut monograph. More momentous than *Campus*'s scope was the new epistemic lens it brought to bear on the subject.

While working on an exhibition of Stanford University's architecture in 1976, Turner discovered that no history of the American campus had been written (Turner 1984, ix). Eight years later, he published his seminal text to fill this historiographical gap. Prefacing the book with a discussion of Jefferson's "academical village," Turner explained that American higher education's recognition of colleges as "cities

in microcosm" resulted in a uniquely American institutional type: the campus. The US acquired the British collegiate model, a living-learning arrangement in which the college hosted the breadth of a community's activities, unlike the solely academic concerns to which continental European universities catered. However, the early American college differed from the British model in three ways: first, its autonomy versus the congregation of colleges into universities in the UK; second, the marriage of college and country versus the urban character of British universities; and third, the spaciousness of freestanding buildings in a landscape versus Britain's cloisters. Having distanced itself from the city, the American college had to reconstitute it. "The romantic notion of a college in nature, removed from the corrupting forces of the city, became an American idea," Turner explained, "But in the process, the college had to become even more fully a kind of miniature city. And its design became an experiment in urbanism" (4). The word *campus* evolved from its original Latin meaning of field at Princeton to denote the entire university property and finally became a nationwide index of an academic *genius loci*. Evolving from a reference to pristine green land into a pairing of architecture and landscape, campus came to denote a synthesis which produced a veritable academic sense of *place*.

In his survey, Turner emphasized the interrelationship of ideal and design, focusing on historical examples as idealistic proposals rather than as compromised realizations. This approach foregrounded the projective nature of the architectural plan. Challenging the idea that campus planning was rare (and that the University of Virginia was an exception) and that campuses tended to grow haphazardly (and were thus worthy of scholarly neglect), he asserted that campuses have always been subject to design and projection, setting out "to examine the English collegiate tradition in America as a relatively isolated subject" (6). Despite English and, later, German influences on American higher education, the planning of universities was not a slave to European inclinations and trajectories as most architecture and design trends in the US were. The campus was subject to distinctly American social, cultural, and economic conditions. "In some ways," Turner stated, "architectural developments can be seen as expressions of the educational ones" (15). American campuses manifest the evolving American understanding of higher learning.

The history of campus planning and architecture that he traced followed a trajectory which paralleled the evolution of the American nation-state, from the colonial period to the post-Second World War period. The turning points in American history find their architectural and planning reflections in the institutions of higher

education. Every age of the American socio-political experiment produced its corresponding campus. In both city and country, the early colonial colleges gave way to universities for a new, vast, expanding nation. The institution of the land grant model and the rise of the City Beautiful movement produced new campuses, just as revivalist impulses took inspiration from colonial and Gothic precedents. The end of campus historicism augured by Modernism was soon challenged by Postmodernism. This historical evolution reflected the American campus' "peculiar state of equilibrium between change and continuity" (304). The campus has been at once conservatively historicist and experimentally projective, growing out of a European tradition but producing a tradition of its own. Turner summed up its meandering development aptly:

The history of the American campus reveals the varied and innovative forms this expression can take. These have included the open quadrangles of colonial Harvard or the College of William and Mary, forthrightly part of the towns they were in and of the society whose values they represented; the nineteenth-century college in nature, often poised on a hill, surveying the "New Zion," as Union's President Nott called his vision of America; the informal, park-like campus plans of the early land-grant schools, reflecting populist values in reaction against the elitist formality of the classical college; the Beaux Arts organization of the new American university, with its complex and orderly system of parts; the revival of the English medieval enclosed quadrangle, expressing the resurgence of conservative collegiate values; and the recent campus plans generated by circulation patterns, reflecting the fluid and unpredictable nature of contemporary education. (Turner 1984, 304)

Growth and change notwithstanding, Turner affirmed that the American campus maintains its sense of place, physically embodying academic spirit, institutional character, and communal ideals.

The idea of the campus in Turner's work is entangled with American exceptionalism. His study was concerned only with the American campus, taking a chronological historiographical approach coupled with morphological analyses and aesthetic criticism. In contrast to Dober's chief focus on practice, Turner's was a work of pure scholarship. Here, the discipline/profession divide was patent: Turner's study was an academic history of campus, while Dober's emerged out of a planning practice. The campus discourse, hitherto functionalist in orientation, took a historical and aesthetic turn in the wake of Turner's monograph. And Dober was not immune to this new discursive orientation.

2.2. PLACEMA(R)KING CAMPUSCAPES

After two decades focusing primarily on his practice and during which he produced a couple of reports for the Educational Facilities Laboratories, Dober returned to

authorial work in the early 1990s, publishing three books in the span of a decade. The first, published in 1993, reiterated that campus planning as an art sublimates into design. As higher education had by then become ubiquitous in the US and around the world, *Campus Design* was a plea for universities to provide physical environments that combine “the visionary and the pragmatic,” ones that “will resonate with reality, without compromising ingenuity or idealism,” eschewing “neither art [n]or function” (Dober 1992, 4). Because higher education is both complex and diverse, Dober brought together insights culled from traditional town planning, urban design, participatory planning, and landscape architecture. He divided the objects of campus design into buildings, landscapes, and circulation systems, and termed the process of designing with them placemaking and placemarking. He cited as a foundational influence Kevin Lynch’s seminal work on environmental cognition (1960), applying his insights to university campuses. No longer ascribing prime value in campus planning solely to functional precision, Dober came to terms with the bounded omniscience of the designer, highlighting as positive the field’s naturalization of equivocalty: “The master plan (fixed and static) gave way to the campus plan (flexible and dynamic). Process and plan became interdependent” (5). The adaptable had come to replace the rigid, the iterative taking the place of the linear.

Effusively citing Turner’s book, Dober asserted that campus planning is “not an arcane art” but is alive and well (5). A combination of “placemaking” and “placemarking,” campus design sculpts both the spatial and the material to produce place on site. It goes beyond the *parti* and the diagrammatic masterplan to tangible, material design decisions on the ground. Dober defined placemaking as the process of schematic design which takes context and program into account to produce an overall campus plan. Finer grained is placemarking, the combination of physical elements—landmarks, styles, materials, and landscapes—to give a campus a coherent image. This critically involves utilizing design artefacts as cultural currencies and mediums of interpersonal and transhistorical exchange. Placemaking addresses overarching physical form and organization, while the placemarking engages the meanings and experiences afforded by design decisions (figure 3). Discerning a gap in the campus literature regarding the latter, Dober’s book was explicitly concerned with placemarking.

Since campus planning, or here placemaking, has been much studied and widely accepted, Dober affirmed the need for a dedicated and detailed treatment of “placemarking aspects of campus design without subordinating the importance of the broader plan as a matrix that co-ordinates the individual design

actions into a unified scheme” (6). Paying attention to placemarking is important because it produces contextual authenticity, which balances continuity and change, helps attract students and patrons to the institution, and remedies what Dober considered to be the regrettable physical state of universities. In advocating campus beauty and vitality, Dober spoke of an “ecological ethics” by which architecture and landscape are integrated into an evocative place. Terming his book a “professional reference work,” he started with a survey of exemplars, which he had visited, as models from which to learn. The bulk of the book is dedicated to examining each of his four elements of placemarking, accompanied by historical and contemporary examples. He concludes with a chapter on placemaking, explaining how to make the most of these elements: “Placemaking binds the individual campus design actions into a coherent entity or, at least, makes known the context into which individual actions can be best fitted for optimum effect” (8). The campus must amount to something more than the sum of its aforementioned parts. In effect, the campus is an embodiment of an integrated plurality—a community—and its design “in this respect is the collective stewardship of a communal art form” (8).

Campus Design was published after the passing of the golden age, at a time when university development was a more sobering prospect. Despite its applicability to campus design generally, the book was geared towards the revitalization and renewal of extant campuses, not their expansion nor the establishment of new ones. Dober conceived of campus design as a dialectic of placemarking and placemaking, of

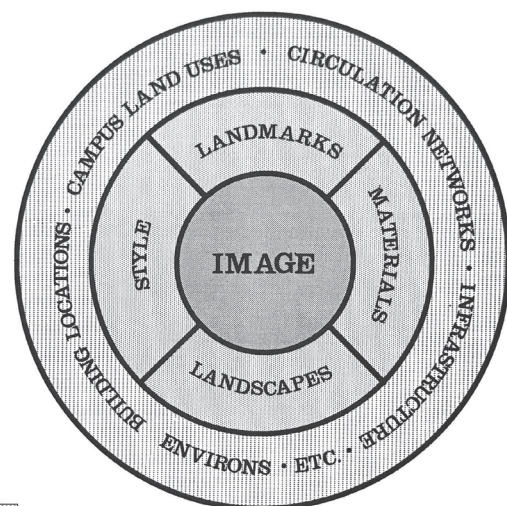


Figure 3: Dober’s conceptual diagram of campus design factors. (Dober 1992, 12)

architecture, landscaping, and sitework on one hand, and planning on the other. The two were not conceived as independent activities, but as analogous to a "mobius strip" (229). Dober provided adaptable methods applicable to diverse contexts and situations, albeit, centered on the West. This is attested by the lineage in which he situated the campus: done well, campus design ascends to the status of "civic art," becoming a worthy successor to the great European public spatial types: agora, forum, cathedral, town square, palace, and "centers of commerce, transportation, and government" (280). Dober's underscoring of the campus type's public and aesthetic significance followed the example of a book published the year before, *The Campus as a Work of Art*. Thomas Gaines wrote it to enjoin the appreciation of campuses as artworks and to appraise the artistic quality of campuses in the US. With aesthetics having taken center stage in the discourse, *Campus Design* was an effort to apply a method to the subjective, a synthesis Dober spent much of the rest of his life articulating.

On the heels of this dialectical approach, came a book focused on major elements not explicitly encompassed in either of Dober's dual categories, but is unmistakably present in his grand analogy: architecture. Campus buildings mediate between the overarching campus plan and the details of open space design and landscaping. Dober's *Campus Architecture: Building in the Groves of Academe* served to instrumentalize historical knowledge towards the development of new campus architecture. Building off the assertion that campuses have succeeded the great public spaces of the past—"three-dimensional record[s] of aesthetic achievement . . . indicative of their period and its aspirations"—he posited the campus as a planned and designed space, a marked and made place, melding the old and new—"nouveaux et anciens ensemble" (Dober 1996, x). American architecture had assumed the mantle of great public space, Dober asserted, and the campus became America's earliest contribution to the discipline of architecture.

Campus planning and development is an environmental art in its most expansive sense, an aesthetic, social, and cultural phenomenon worthy of study and practice. The design of a campus landscape is just as significant as the design of its buildings. When it comes to campuses, Dober pronounced landscape architecture "the consummate companion of admirable buildings" (ix). Architecture and landscape, together, make a campus. Dober defined campus as "an ensemble of buildings, landscapes, and infrastructure used for higher education, as it exists and as it is planned . . . a cachet implying an ordered design, special and coherent" (166). The plural is integral to the idea of the campus; a group of buildings

standing alone together on a single plot of land do not constitute a campus. An integrated plurality, a cogent set of interrelationships, is necessary to produce a whole that transcends its parts. For Dober, therein lies the importance of Architecture; it brings all the parts into a harmonious spatial symphony ready for use. He also provided another, prescriptive definition of campus architecture: "buildings and landscapes synergistically engaged and integrated as projects which are situated in paradigms planned and designed for higher education" (175). As supra-architectural compositions, these paradigms run the gamut between the "Apollonian" and the "Dionysian," that is the formal and the organic (197). In this definition, the campus is an intentional construct and its guiding hand is the architect's, through whose abilities a dignified place is fashioned out of given space, land, and material.

A major focus of Dober's in this book is the adoption of Modernist architecture as a spatial vehicle for higher education. He asserted that the visionary drive of Modernism aligned with higher education's civilizing mission. Modernism's ascent as the wellspring of collegiate architecture during the 20th century is a reflection of its agility in performing as a "machine for learning" just as it claimed to be a machine for living (8). Modernist architecture's economy did not sacrifice aesthetics; it was both relatively cheap and arguably beautiful. On a cultural register, Modernist rational functionalism mirrored rugged American pragmatism. Modernism's liberating aesthetic fit perfectly with the American ethic of liberty. Dober traced the development of Modernist campus architecture along three stages: early Modern campus architecture was typified by austere, sanitized boxes, which gave way to mid-Modern mannerism with its textured and sculptural effects applied to the box, while late Modern architecture was more elaborate, often segmenting and deconstructing the building form and differentiating its masses, an approach that has become the foundation of much contemporary campus architecture. As Modernism took root in American campuses, it became the quotidian architecture of higher education.

Modernism, however, did not erase the extant architecture of American campuses. It simply populated them with a new generation of buildings, standing in contrast, and sometimes in tension, with the old guard. Dober explained that the competition between traditional and modern architecture reflected the broader conflicting cultural attitudes of conservative sentimentality and progressive honesty. Campus architecture continues to be an actor in this dialectic with history. Dober contended that the only universal attribute of American campuses is their diversity. That he prescribed a transparent campus planning and

design process applicable to any and all campuses did not mean that they were to be homogenous. Nor should this approach be limited to higher education; though he defined the campus primarily as an educational type, he presciently admitted that the concept “may have useful application for any large group of buildings and landscapes constructed over time and intended to be mutable environments responding to social and cultural needs” (166-7). It is this functional flexibility, contextual adaptability, and aesthetic coherence that makes the campus as potent a spatial model as it is.

Dober's subsequent book, published at the turn of the century, focused on that consummate companion of architecture. In line with Dober's Modernist functionalist predilections, *Campus Landscape: Function, Forms, Features* applied an analytical treatment to the subject, unpacking campus landscape into its constituent parts. Like most of his previous books, this one constituted a response to the lack of books on the topic of campus landscapes. It was a comprehensive, illustrated survey and guide for the design of “the green environment that situates, serves, and symbolizes higher education” (Dober 2000, xv). He acknowledged, however, that not all landscapes are green nor outdoors. Illustrating his expansive definition of the subject, Dober considered hardscapes and interior gardens to be important elements of campus landscapes. The book's purpose was to enjoin an “amplitude and appreciation” of campus landscape, because “a campus with minimal landscape is incomplete, inchoate, and incapacitated” (xviii). Dober delineated thirteen campus landscape design determinants which informed the thirty components of his campus design taxonomy. The former are contextual factors that are to be considered in the design of the spatial, graphic, and landscape

types encompassed by the latter (figure 4). Being the functionalist designer that he was, Dober affirmed that the taxonomy is “pragmatic, not theoretical” (xxi). The entire book examined every one of these elements. Curiously, only at the end of the taxonomy, introducing a discussion of wayfinding, lighting, and site furniture, is placemarking discussed, and very briefly so.

So central is the pastoral character of the university campus that the word *campus* had by then come to be applied to non-academic settings characterized by the marriage of architecture and landscape (Mozingo 2003, 2011, Kerr et al. 2016, Collins 1979, Rice 1988, Haresign 1999, Leonard 1999). Despite the increasing popularity and diffusion of the model, Dober described campus landscape “as an endangered art form deserving care, conservation, and curatorial interpretation and assistance” (xxv). Even if campus landscape architecture is a worthy artistic enterprise that has not been given its academic due, this neglect provides an opportunity for intervention. Landscape is “nature's equivalent of a great painting,” and “what nature cannot provide, occasionally designers can invent” (xxv-23). With Dober's attention squarely on landscape, deep in the book was his most succinct definition of campus: “Campus spaces are essentially determined landscape designs” (155). For him, as for Robert Stern, the campus is a purposive pastoral endeavor (Stern 1986, 2010). It is imperative that every campus planning and design project give landscape its due consideration (and, critically, funding). Dober's book was intended to ensure that these efforts and funds are put to good use; it was another of his self-described practitioner's handbooks, a “call for action and demonstration” of the subject's importance and relevance (xxvi). As Dober conceptualized it, campus landscape architecture demands the diligence of the fabricator coupled with the finesse of the painter.

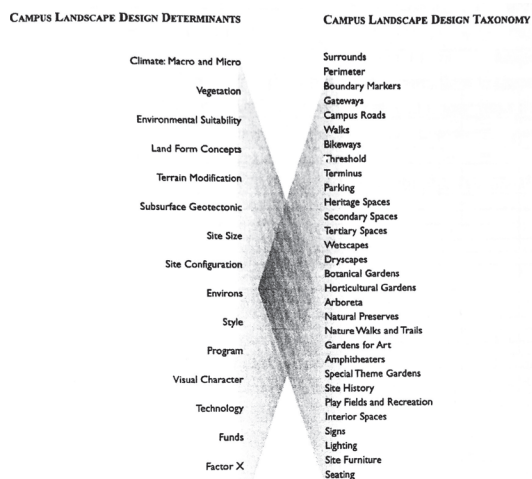


Figure 4: Impact diagram in which the components are impacted by determinants. (Dober 2000, xxi)

2.3. CAMPUS PATRIMONY, CODA OF THE CAMPUS PATRIARCH

The lyricism of the campus building enterprise had at this point risen to the surface of Dober's work. His next three books, his last, *Campus Heritage*, *Old Main*, and *Campus Image and Identity*, focused squarely on campus character and feel. They were published by the Society for College and University Planning, a professional association Dober helped found in 1965. Foregrounding the campus as a purposive human creation at the intersection of art and history, these books constituted his oeuvre's peroratory denouement, crystallizing in printed form Dober's love of campus. Published in 2005 and 2006 respectively, the first two books were companion publications which explored the campus as a repository of history and memory, as

a living museum. Dober defined campus heritage as “the three-dimensional commemoration, celebration, and memorializing of people, activities, and events through and with physical objects that are consciously created or identified to serve and symbolize a college or university’s purpose, presence, and patrimony” (Dober 2005, 5). Seeking to convey the different means through which universities can make their settings more humane and relatable to people in and around them, Dober structured the book as a “descriptive taxonomy of opportunit[ies] for inscribing heritage on campus]: architecture, landscapes, memorials, and naming protocols—the self-evident as well as the idiosyncratic.” (7). Illustrated with material from his personal collection—archival images acquired and photographs taken over the span of half a century—the book is a document of the extent of Dober’s travels, interests, and expertise.

Old Main expanded an eponymous section from *Campus Heritage*’s discussion of historic architecture on campus into an “architectural biography” of a ubiquitous American campus building type (Dober 2006, 15). Based on extensive research, the book strung together brief histories of Main buildings on over 200 campuses, presented alongside archival imagery composed exclusively of historical postcards, to paint a picture of an enduring architectural-academic presence across space and time. This “visually delightful collection of historic picture post cards,” Dober explained, “help[s] support the premise that a rounded view of America’s collegiate enterprises would be incomplete without understanding and acknowledging the contributions these magnificent masterworks have made to campus development” (1).

These books eschewed analytical density for narrative breadth and disquisitive text for expressive imagery. This focus on the image and experience of campus was at home with the 21st-century understanding of campuses as brandscapes (Chapman 2006; Mitchell 2007; Coulson 2010; Silverman and Sweeney 2016). The attention here is less on the causal relationship between environmental design and human behavior than it is on the correlation between campus imageability and complexity on one hand and attraction and belonging on the other. Dober appears to have taken this mantra of evocation over substance to heart; his two penultimate books gave almost equal weight to text and image, but the latter reigned supreme in his final publication. Published two years before his death, his last book was less a scholarly exposition than a brimming coffee table book. It explored the ways in which the material composition that produces the campus sense of place, campus *identity*, can live up to the imaginaries that people construct around specific academic institutions, campus *image* (Dober 2012, 7).

The book commenced with a brief introduction which led into over 400 color photographs, most of which were from Dober’s personal collection. The book was a leisurely photographic survey of campus architecture, art, artefacts, landscaping, and open space design—a travelogue documenting countless instances of what he had two decades earlier termed campus placemaking and placemarking. With this ode to the campus pride of place, Dober bade the discourse a fond adieu.

CONCLUSION

Dober’s intellectual biography is uniquely intertwined with the biography of campus discourse. “It is not often,” Alex Krieger once said, “when someone, virtually single-handedly, reinvents a particular discipline, as Richard Dober certainly did with modern campus planning” (Lehman, Reen, McNamara n.d.). Yet, Dober was not simply akin to a wind driving a discursive flock of birds, but was more like the eldest, largest bird in this growing flock, a bird which had outsize influence on its movements, but which was nonetheless subject to the flock’s collective dynamic. Dober jumpstarted the discourse with his 1960s’ campus planning guide, a book demonstrative of the modernist functionalist approach to campus planning. Here, the design of university grounds was understood as a problem that may be analyzed and broken down into constituent parts, which are then systematically addressed and reassembled. This was simply the beginning for Dober, who spent the rest of his career practicing and writing about campus planning and design. His oeuvre exemplifies the fact that the campus necessarily engages more than a single discipline or profession; at minimum, planning, architecture, and landscape architecture are integral components of campus development. With eight books published on various aspects of the subject, he is the field’s most prolific author.

On the other hand, the most famous campus text, the field’s classic, is Turner’s *Campus*, the first comprehensive history of American campus design. The publication of this monograph was a turning point in the discourse; the determination to tackle the challenges of campus planning and make the best of campus development opportunities gave way to the critical appreciation of campuses as purposive designs. The instrumental study of campus as a functional object took a back seat to the humanistic study of campus as an aesthetic object. Dober’s and Turner’s two books are emblematic of the divide between architecture the profession and architecture the discipline: Dober’s is a handbook for a planning practice, while Turner’s study is an academic history of the campus in the United States. The post-Turner discursive landscape saw the proliferation of publications scrutinizing the campus

as a value-laden object and a spatial inscription of its particular time and place (Stern 1986; Gaines 1991; Muthesius 2000; Kenney et al. 2005; Chapman 2006; Coulson et al. 2010; Stern 2010).

The godfather of the discourse was not immune to this discursive shift; Dober did not resist the humanistic turn. Rather, he took it in stride, producing book after book attempting to reconcile his rationalist, modernist predilections with the ascendance of lyricism and beauty as core analytical concerns. His oeuvre developed and expanded, taking up campus history and aesthetics as primary interpretive threads. The ardent

functionalist of yesteryear had to adapt and assume a humanistic outlook in his later years. So, the story of campus discourse appears to be a bipolar story, a climactic before and after: a modern(ist) Gilgamesh survives the Turner initiated flood of aestheticism by transforming into an aesthete-sailor-savant himself. But perhaps these orientations were not so different in the first place; if Peter Eisenman's (1976) claim that functionalism is scarcely any different from humanism holds, then perhaps Dober's smooth transition is evidence that there was not a discursive shift at all.

REFERENCES

- Chapman, M. Perry. 2006. *American Places: In Search of the Twenty-First Century Campus*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Collins, Huntly. 1979. "Corporate Campus: Learning Your Way to a Better Job." *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning* 11, no. 5: 67-68.
- Coulson, Jonathan, Paul Roberts, and Isabelle Taylor. 2010. *University Planning and Architecture: The Search for Perfection*. London: Routledge.
- Crawford, Mark. 2014. "A Century of Campus Planning: Past, Present, and Future." *Facilities Manager* (July/August): 24-28.
- Dober, Richard P. 1963. *Campus Planning*. New York: Reinhold.
- Dober, Richard P. 1965. *The New Campus in Britain: Ideas and Consequences for the United States*. New York: Educational Facilities Laboratory.
- Dober, Richard P. 1992. *Campus Design*. New York: Wiley.
- Dober, Richard P. 1996. *Campus Architecture: Building in the Groves of Academe*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Dober, Richard P. 2000. *Campus Landscape: Functions, Forms, Features*. New York: Wiley.
- Dober, Richard P. 2005. *Campus Heritage: An Appreciation of the History & Traditions of College and University Architecture*. Ann Arbor, MI: Society for College and University Planning.
- Dober, Richard P. 2006. *Old Main: Fame, Fate and Contributions to Campus Planning and Design*. Ann Arbor, MI: Society for College and University Planning.
- Dober, Richard P. 2012. *Campus Image and Identity*. Ann Arbor, MI: Society for College and University Planning.
- Dober, Richard P. n.d. Curriculum Vitae. Belmont, MA: Dober Lidsky Mathey. http://www.dlmlplanners.com/pdfs/DLM_RPD_Resume.pdf
- Eisenman, Peter. 1976. "Post-Functionalism." *Oppositions* 6 (Fall): 9-12.
- Gaines, Thomas A. 1991. *The Campus as a Work of Art*. New York: Praeger.
- Haresign, David T. 1999. "Is a Corporate Campus Right for Your Business?" *Site Selection* 44, no. 1 (January): 1118-20.
- Kanvinde, Achyut, and H. James Miller. 1969. *Campus Design in India: Experience of a Developing Nation*. Topeka, KS: Jostens/American Yearbook Co.
- Kenney, Daniel R., Ricardo Dumont, and Ginger Kenney. 2005. *Mission and Place: Strengthening Learning and Community Through Campus Design*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Kerr, Clark. 2001. *The Uses of the University*. 5th ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Kerr, Ron, Sarah Robinson, and Carole Elliott. 2016. "Modernism, Postmodernism, and Corporate Power: Historicizing the Architectural Typology of the Corporate Campus." *Management & Organizational History* 11, no. 2: 123-146.
- Lehman, Reen, McNamara Funeral Home. 2014. "Richard P. Dober: March 30, 1928 ~ January 21, 2014 (age 85)." Obituary. <https://www.lehmanreen.com/notices/Richard-Dober>
- Leonard, Sharon. 1999. "Is a Corporate Campus in Your Future?" *HRMagazine* 44, no. 10 (January): 215.
- Lynch, Kevin. 1960. *The Image of the City*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Mitchell, William J. 2007. *Imagining MIT: Designing a Campus for the Twenty-first Century*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Mozingo, Louise. 2003. "Campus, Estate, and Park: Lawn Culture Comes to the Corporation" in *Everyday America: Cultural Landscape Studies after J. B. Jackson*. Edited by Chris Wilson and Paul Groth. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Mozingo, Louise. 2011. *Pastoral Capitalism: A History of Suburban Corporate Landscapes*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

A Campus Biography

- Muthesius, Stefan. 2000. *The Postwar University: Utopianist Campus and College*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Rice, A. Franklin. 1988. "Creating a Corporate Campus: A Site Feasibility Study." Masters thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. <https://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/14618>
- Saarienen, Eero. 1960. "Campus Planning: The Unique World of the University." *Architectural Record* 128 (November): 123-130.
- Schmertz, Mildred F. 1972. *Campus Planning and Design*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Silverman, Jonathan, and Meghan Sweeney, eds. 2016. *Remaking the American College Campus: Essays*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company.
- Stern, Robert A. M. 1986. "Academical Villages: A Place a part," *Pride of Place*. PBS teleseries. Directed by Murray Grigor. Published in VHS format by Films for the Humanities, Princeton, NJ.
- Stern, Robert A. M. 2010. *On Campus: Architecture, Identity, and Community*. Edited by Peter Morris Dixon, Alexander Newman-Wise, and Jonathan Grzywacz. New York: Monacelli Press.
- Turner, Paul Venable. 1984. *Campus: An American Planning Tradition*. New York: Architectural History Foundation.
- UNESCO. 1975. *Planning Buildings and Facilities for Higher Education*. Stroudsburg, PA: Dowden, Hutchinson & Ross.
- UNESCO. 1979. *Planning Standards for Higher Education Facilities: Examples from National Practice*. Paris: UNESCO.